

null

C O N F I D E N T I A L

ABUJA 02002

SIPDIS

ABUJACX:

ACTION: ECON

INFO: AMB POL DAO DCM

DISSEMINATION: ECON /1

CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:JCAMPBELL

DRAFTED: ECON:NQUAST

CLEARED: POL"HMERRITT

VZCZCAUI443

OO RUEHC RUEATRS RUEHOS

DE RUEHUJA #2002 2160626

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

O 040626Z AUG 06

FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6679

INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS PRIORITY 4729

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 002002

SIPDIS

TREASURY FOR DPETERS/SEVERENS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/04/2016

TAGS: [EFIN](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER RESIGNS

REF: A: ABUJA 1587

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOHN CAMPBELL FOR REASONS 1.4 A, B, D

11. (C) Upon returning from an overseas trip to the August 2 public announcement that she had been replaced as the head of the Economic Team, Foreign Minister Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala tendered her resignation on August 3. The official announcement said she was resigning for personal and family reasons. We have conflicting reports from sources, however, as to whether she jumped or was pushed, with at least one saying that she had a letter requesting her resignation. Her recent transfer from the head of the Finance Ministry had raised international concern about the prospects for the continuation of Nigeria's economic reforms, for which she was responsible. The President's announcement at the time that she would remain the leader of the economic team calmed those concerns somewhat. Her abrupt removal from that job, apparently without consultation, may have been more than she was willing to put up. World Bank rep Hafez Ghanem had told us back at the time of the reshuffle that he expected that she would quit if it turned out that she no longer had charge of the economic program (reftel).

12. (C) The Mission had been seeking a courtesy call for Ambassador Campbell, at which he had planned to deliver a demarche on Chad and Sudan. The report of her staff that she had not come in to work and remained incommunicado at home, was the first hint at her reaction to the news of her removal as the head of the economic reform team. We then heard the report that she had resigned as Foreign Minister on the radio and at about the same time received a call from a one of her staff with the news. Much of the speculation about her removal from the economic portfolio, including from the former National Security Adviser, took the line that she was removed to make pre-election access by the President to public funds an easier matter. CAMPBELL

CAMPBELL